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The Exposed State: Israel, Gaza, and the Collapse of the Moral Architecture of the West

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“The dead have names. The weapons have serial numbers. The vetoes have timestamps.”
— Laâla Bechetoula

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Erasure

I was born in Laghouat, at the edge of the Algerian Sahara, in the house of Ahmed Chatta — a man abducted by French colonial forces in 1958 and never seen again. No grave. No body. No official accounting. Only absence.

Colonial systems often erase in two stages. First the body disappears. Then the archive is organized around the disappearance.

I grew up inside that silence.

For that reason, when the first images from Gaza emerged after October 7, 2023, I recognized something immediately. Not the event itself. History never repeats itself mechanically. What I recognized was the grammar: the structure through which an entire population is progressively transformed into a demographic problem, a security burden, an obstacle to be managed, displaced, fragmented, or eliminated.

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Girl in Gaza on her way to get food (CC BY-SA 4.0)

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The vocabulary changes across centuries. The mechanism rarely does.

The destruction of civilian infrastructure.

The separation of populations under different legal systems.

The language of biological threat.

The normalization of mass death.

The bureaucratic management of starvation.

The transformation of entire urban spaces into kill zones.

These are not accidental excesses appearing suddenly in wartime.

They belong to a recognizable historical architecture.

This text is not written as a slogan, nor as an exercise in rhetorical outrage.

It is written as a historical and legal record grounded in publicly documented evidence: United Nations investigations, rulings and provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice, arrest warrants from the International Criminal Court, humanitarian reports, medical documentation, demographic data, journalistic investigations, and statements made publicly by Israeli officials themselves.

The purpose is not merely to denounce. It is to establish continuity between evidence, language, law, and power.

Future historians will not suffer from lack of documentation regarding Gaza. The quantity of

archived material is already unprecedented. The question that will confront future generations is different:

How did the international system continue supplying weapons, diplomatic protection, and political legitimacy while the evidence accumulated in real time?

Differential Humanity

Israel presents itself internationally as "the Middle East's only democracy." The phrase has been repeated for decades by Western governments and media institutions as a self-evident truth requiring no serious examination.

But democracies are not ultimately defined by elections alone. Colonial powers also organized elections. Segregationist systems have historically maintained parliamentary institutions. The decisive question is different:

Does the state apply equal legal value to all human beings living under its effective control?

Across the territory extending from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, two populations continue to live under fundamentally different legal realities.

Israeli citizens enjoy civilian law, political rights, freedom of movement, and institutional protections guaranteed by the state.

Palestinians in the occupied territories remain subject to military orders, administrative detention, movement restrictions, land confiscation, permit regimes, military courts, and expanding settlement infrastructures considered illegal under international law.

This dual structure has been documented extensively by major human rights organizations long before October 2023.

In 2021, Human Rights Watch published A Threshold Crossed, concluding that Israeli authorities were committing the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution.

In 2022, Amnesty International reached similar conclusions in its report Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians.

The Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem had already described the governing structure as "a regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea."

These findings emerged before the destruction of Gaza reached its current scale.

The issue, therefore, is not whether October 7 created a new political reality. The issue is whether October 7 accelerated and exposed an already existing structure.

The vocabulary of democracy remained intact internationally.

The underlying legal architecture moved elsewhere.

Elimination

Mass atrocities do not begin with killing. They begin with linguistic preparation.

Before populations are destroyed physically, they are progressively transformed into abstractions, biological threats, demographic dangers, or contaminating presences.

Language performs the moral preparation for violence.

Image: Yoav Gallant, Minister of Defence of the State of Israel (CC BY-SA 3.0)

On October 9, 2023, Israeli **Defense Minister Yoav Gallant** announced a "complete siege" on Gaza: **no food, no water, no electricity, no fuel. He described the population under siege as "human animals."**

The phrase matters historically.

Not because it is uniquely shocking, but because dehumanizing vocabularies appear with striking regularity across colonial and genocidal systems.

In Algeria, colonized populations were described in military literature as "indigenous masses" requiring pacification.

In Rwanda, Tutsis became "cockroaches."

In Bosnia, Muslims became an invasive demographic threat.

In Nazi Europe, Jews became vermin and disease.

The purpose of such language is not descriptive. It is administrative and psychological.

Once a population is transformed linguistically into a biological or civilizational threat, extraordinary violence becomes easier to justify publicly.

"There are no innocent civilians in Gaza."

"Erase Gaza."

"Voluntary migration."

“Flatten everything.”

“Humanitarian pressure.”

“Buffer zones.”

The expressions vary. The structure remains recognizable.

Annihilation

Numbers matter historically because they reveal scale. But numbers also conceal.

Every large-scale atrocity eventually produces statistical language: dead, wounded, displaced, missing, orphaned, malnourished.

The danger is that arithmetic begins replacing humanity itself.

As of late 2025, tens of thousands of Palestinians had been confirmed dead in Gaza according to multiple humanitarian and UN-linked estimates.

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Palestinian civilians in Gaza on 29 January 2025 (CC BY-SA 4.0)

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Among the dead were thousands of children.

One of them was Hind Rajab.

She was five years old.

On January 29, 2024, she remained trapped inside a vehicle in Tel al-Hawa surrounded by the bodies of her relatives after Israeli fire struck the car.

Investigators later counted hundreds of bullet impacts on the vehicle.

She was five years old.

Another child, Jinan Iskafi, died from severe malnutrition after shortages of infant formula intensified under blockade conditions documented by humanitarian agencies.

The formula existed outside Gaza.

It did not enter.

Elsewhere, doctors described performing emergency cesarean procedures without anesthesia because medical supplies had collapsed under siege conditions.

These are not metaphors.

They are medically documented realities.

Reprocide

What occurred in Gaza between 2023 and 2026 may require a more precise conceptual vocabulary.

I use the term reprocide to describe the systematic destruction of a population's reproductive future through direct and indirect means: the targeting of fertility infrastructure, the collapse of maternal healthcare, extreme nutritional deprivation, forced displacement conditions incompatible with childbirth, and the destruction of stored reproductive material.

At Al-Basma IVF Centre, Gaza's principal fertility clinic, shelling destroyed thousands of frozen embryos and reproductive materials stored for Palestinian families undergoing fertility treatment.

The destruction extended beyond the present generation.

It targeted biological continuity itself.

The Digital Archive

Previous genocides were reconstructed after the fact.

Witnesses testified years later. Archives emerged decades later. Photographs surfaced gradually.

Gaza unfolded differently.

It may become the first large-scale atrocity in modern history documented continuously in real time: by satellites, smartphones, aid workers, journalists, medical staff, drones, surveillance systems, social media archives, open-source investigators, and, at times, by perpetrators themselves.

The world did not fail to see.

The world saw continuously.

Weapons transfers continued during documentation. Diplomatic protection continued during documentation. Vetoes continued during documentation.

The archive and the violence advanced simultaneously.

Impunity

No prolonged military campaign of this scale functions without external systems of supply, financing, diplomatic protection, and strategic shielding.

Since October 2023, the United States has remained Israel's principal military backer through large-scale transfers of munitions, missile-defense support, logistical coordination, and emergency military appropriations measured in billions of dollars.

Repeated ceasefire resolutions at the United Nations Security Council encountered American vetoes.

European governments adopted a parallel posture: expressions of concern combined with continued strategic cooperation and varying levels of military or industrial support.

Impunity no longer functioned discreetly.

It became visible infrastructure.

Collapse

The post-1945 international order was constructed publicly around several universal claims: human rights, civilian protection, international law, genocide prevention, equal human dignity.

Gaza exposed the fragility of those claims when confronted with strategic alliances.

The deeper crisis concerns selective universality: a system in which legal principles remain fully operational against adversaries yet increasingly negotiable when allies are implicated.

What becomes of international law when enforcement depends primarily on geopolitical alignment?

What becomes of democratic morality when mass death remains tolerable provided it is administered by allied states?

These questions now extend far beyond the Middle East.

They concern the credibility of the international system itself.

The Record

The archive is already immense.

The dead have names. The weapons have serial numbers. The orders have signatures. The vetoes have timestamps.

Future historians will not ask whether sufficient evidence existed.

The evidence is overwhelming.

They will ask something far more difficult:

How did the international system continue functioning normally while the destruction remained visible continuously?

How did legality become conditional?

Hind Rajab. Refaat Alareer. Dr. Adnan al-Bursh. Thousands of unnamed children beneath collapsed concrete.

Their names will remain in the historical record alongside those who authorized, financed, justified, protected, or normalized what occurred.

Archives eventually open. Mass graves eventually speak. The disappeared eventually return through testimony, memory, and documentation.

I learned that lesson in Laghouat, in the house of a disappeared man whose body was never returned.

The record remains open.

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His work appears in Countercurrents, Global Research, Réseau International, Le Quotidien d'Oran, Sri Lanka Guardian, and other international platforms. This article integrates and crowns a corpus of analytical work produced between November 2025 and April 13, 2026.

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Featured image: A boy sits in rubble in Gaza. Photo Credit: UNICEF

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